

## Seventeen years by Jancys-Blue-Bayou

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**Summary:** Jonathan having packed up his room reflects on what it means to him and moving on.

## Seventeen years

Seventeen years of my life, packed up in one day...

It's all gone now, in the truck. Room seems smaller without it, somehow. It's weird to see it like this, he's never seen it empty before. Doesn't feel like his room without it. He wonders how his room at the new house will be. His room wasn't much but it was *his*, his safe space. Where he could be alone.

He could come home from school, put on Joy Division on his record player and put on his headphones and lose himself in his own world and forget about all the shit going on in the real one. It used to be bullies at school, or worrying over how they'd pay the bills. At one point it was that he thought his little brother was dead, but that he couldn't forget so he just ended up crying and crying.

He could shut the door and shut out his father's yelling when he still was around, or later the sound of mom and him yelling over the phone. Glancing over to where it once was hung up on the wall he recalls Lonnie in the fall of 1983 ordering him to take down his Evil Dead poster — like that was what mattered at that point, like he could still order him to do anything. It stayed up, it was *his*, *his* poster that *he* got from *his* job at the movie theatre and put up on *his* wall in *his* room. That it was always *his*, he loved that. Mom let him put up whatever he wanted in his room so it became his. And the last time his dad could order him to do anything was when he was 10 and was forced to shoot a rabbit. Never again after that. Partly because he himself made his mind up about that when he ran home and straight into his room and cried and cried, and partly because Lonnie pretty much gave up on him after that which was a relief.

His room. Almost always a Lonnie free zone. Really, only a select few has ever been in it. Will and mom of course. Will who'd come into his room to show him his latest drawings, and who'd sit on the bed with him and listen to The Clash and Bowie and all the other great music he was eager to introduce his little brother too. Mom who'd always knock and would nag him about putting his clothes on the floor but never about what went up on his walls. Mom who came in the day after his 10th birthday and told him she had a present for him she

couldn't get him in time for his actual birthday. It was his first camera. He'd wished for one for two years already by that point though he knew they couldn't really afford it. He's later come to suspect his mom got it for him to make up for the rabbit thing, to get him to stop crying, to make him happy when he was the unhappiest boy in the world. He's still not sure what she sold to afford it.

Nancy. Nancy's the other one who's been in his room. A lot of the past year. He loved to be alone in his room. He loved Will being there with him listening to music. He loved his mom coming in and asking what pictures he took with his camera that day. But the times he's spent with Nancy in his room he loves most of all. Everything about it. Things like simply studying together after school. Or showing her his records and the box under his bed full of photos he hasn't shown anyone else before. Laughing with her. Talking for hours and hours about everything with her. Helping her sneak in through the window at night, and all the wonderful things they'd get up to in the dark. And crying in her arms last fall, exhausted and drained in every way after he almost lost Will and mom, if it hadn't been for her.

He hasn't seen the new house so he really has no idea what his new room will be. But it won't be like this. It'll probably be smaller for one, his mom has said they'll each have their own room, but he's decided he'll take the smallest one so the others can have the bigger ones. Makes sense, he'll be out of there soon anyway. Hopefully. The thought of moving out and leaving them scares him but at the same time the thought of moving out on his own, or maybe rather in with Nancy somewhere, anywhere, excites him.

Small or big his room at the new house won't be like this. Most of all because there will be no Nancy there all the time with him. That will suck. It only motivates him more to plan for the future, a future for them together, always. Because that's the only thing he's sure of about the future really. That no matter what, he'll spend it with Nancy.

Suddenly he feels her putting her arms around him from behind.

"What if I just don't let you go?"

That's certainly an option too... Sadly it can't be like that right now

but the thought makes him smile. He turns around and takes her soft small hands in his.